

THE
DECLARATION
OF HIS HIGHNESS
WILLIAM HENRY
By the Grace of God
Prince of Orange, &c.
Of the Reasons inducing him to appear in Arms
FOR
Preserving of the Protestant Religion,
AND FOR
Restoring the Laws and Liberties of the Ancient
KINGDOM of
SCOTLAND.

IT is both certain and evident to all men, that the Publick Peace and Happiness of any State or Kingdom cannot be preserved, where the Laws, Liberties and Customs, Established by the Lawful Authority in it, are openly Transgressed and Annulled: More especially, where the alteration of Religion is endeavoured, and that a Religion which is contrary to Law, is endeavoured to be Introduced: Upon which those who are most Immediately concerned in it, are Indispensably bound to endeavour to Preserve and Maintain the Established Laws, Liberties and Customs; and above all, the Religion and Worship of God, that is Established amongst them: And to take such an effectual care, that the Inhabitants of the said State or Kingdom, may neither be deprived of their Religion, nor of their Civil Rights. Which is so much the more necessary, because the Greatness and Security both of Kings, Royal Families, and of all such as are in Authority, as well as the Happiness of their Subjects and People depend, in a most especial manner, upon the exact Observation and Maintenance of these their Laws, Liberties and Customs.

Upon these grounds it is, that We cannot any longer forbear to Declare, that to Our great Regret, We see that those Councillours, who have now the chief Credit with the King, have no other Design, but to overturn the Religion, Laws and Liberties of those Realms; and to subject them in all things relating to their Consciences, Liberties and Properties, to Arbitrary Government: and that not only by secret and indirect ways, but in such an open and undisguised manner, that their Designs are now become visible to all that consider them.

And indeed the lamentable Effects of an Arbitrary Power and of Evil Counsels are so manifest in the deplorable State of the Kingdom of *Scotland*, that both Our Reason and Conscience

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science do prompt us to an Abhorrence of them. For when We consider the sad Condition of that Nation, though alwaies affectionate to the Royal Family, and governed for many Ages by Laws made by the Authority of their Kings, and of the Estates of Parliament, and by common Customs, is reduced to, by endeavours that have been used to change the constitution of the Monarchy Regulate by Laws, into a Despotick or Arbitrary Power; which doth evidently appear, not only by the actings of Evil Councillours in Power, but by the deliberate and expresse publick Declarations, bearing that the King is an Absolute Monarch, to whom obedience ought to be given in all things without reserve, thereby to make way to introduce what Religion they please, without so much as the necessity of the consent of the Nation by their Estates in Parliament. Whilst We consider and ponder these things, as We cannot but be touched with a tender Sence of those Miseries, so the giving such a Remedy to them, as may be proper, and may answer the Expectation of all good Men, and true Protestants, is the great thing which We propose to our selves in this undertaking: the Equity whereof will be justified to the World, if what hath been acted at the instigation of those Evil Councillours be further impartially weighed.

It is well known, that the Laws, Priviledges and Rights of the Kingdom have been overturned to the great prejudice of King and People, whilst thus, all foundation of Confidence and Trust is removed. And it is no less known what have been the arbitrary Procedures of an encroaching Privy Council; for although by the Laws Enacted by the Authority of King and Parliament, it is expressly prohibited, that the Popish Religion should be professed, or Seminary Priests suffered within the Kingdom, or that the Children of any Noblemen or Gentlemen should be sent abroad to be Educated in Popish Colledges; yet have these Evil Councillours ordered or suffered young Noblemen to be taken from their Relations, and to be sent abroad to be Instructed in Jesuits Colledges, and have likewise caused Schools to be Erected under the conduct of Popish Priests, and that in the Capital City of the Kingdom.

In an open contempt also of the known Laws of the Kingdom, Papists are put into places of Highest Trust both Civil and Military, and entrusted with all the Forts and Magazins. The Rights and Priviledges of the Royal Burrows, the third Estate of Parliament, having as many Deputies in it as all the Shires in the Kingdom, are taken away, and they hindered in the free Election of their Magistrates and Town-Councils, to the manifest violation of their Charters, Established by Law and Immemorial Possession. And all this is done by meer Arbitrary Power, without any Citation, Trial or Sentence.

And whereas no Nation whatsoever can subsist without the Administration of good and impartial Justice, upon which Mens Lives and Liberties, their Honours and Estates depend, yet those Evil Councillours have subjected these to an Arbitrary and Despotick Power: having turned out Judges, who by Law ought to continue during their Life or their good Behaviour, because they would not conform themselves to their Intentions, and put others in their places, who they believe would be more compliant, and that without any regard to their Abilities: by which it evidently appears that those Evil Councillours design to render themselves the absolute Masters of the Lives, Honours and Estates of the Subjects, without being restrained by any Rule or Law.

By the influence of the same Evil Councillours, hath a most exorbitant power been exercised in imposing Bonds and Oaths upon whole Shires without any Law or Act of Parliament: in permitting Free Quarters to the Souldiers, although they had a sufficient Establishment for their Pay, whereby the Kingdom was doubly burthened without any Redress; in imprisoning Gentlemen without any, so much as alledged, Reason, forcing many to accuse and witness against themselves, imposing arbitrary fines, frightening and harassing many parts of the Countrey with intercommoning and Justice-Aires, making some incur the forfeiture of life and fortune for the most general and harmless converse, even with their nearest Relations outlawed: And thus bringing a consternation upon a great part of the Kingdom, which when Outlawries and Intercommonings went out against multitudes upon the slenderest pretexes, was involved so Universally in that danger, that those Councillors themselves were so obnoxious as to find it necessary to have Pardons and Indemnities, whilst the poor people were left to mercy; empowering Officers and Souldiers

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diers to act upon the Subjects living in quiet and full peace, the greatest Barbarities, in destroying them by Hanging, Shooting, and Drowning them without any form of Law, or respect to Age or Sex, not giving some of them time to pray to God for mercy; And this for no other reason, but because they would not answer or satisfy them in such questions as they proposed to them without any warrant of Law, and against the common interest of Mankind, which frees all men from being obliged to discover their secret thoughts. Besides a great many other Violences and Oppressions, to which that poor Nation hath been exposed; without any hope of having an end put to them, or to have relief from them.

And that the Arbitrary and Illegal proceedings of those Evil Councillors might be justified and supported, such a Declaration hath been procured by them, as strikes at the Root of the Government, and overturns the most Sacred Rights of it; in making all Parliaments unnecessary, and taking away all defences of Religion, Liberty and Property, by an assumed and asserted Absolute Power, to which Obedience is required without Reserve: which every good Christian is persuaded to be due to God Almighty alone, all whose Commandments are always Just and Good.

These Evil Councillors have used their utmost endeavours to abolish Penal Laws, excluding all who are Protestants from publick Trust, which give too great a check to their Designs. For the accomplishing of this, a Liberty hath been granted to Dissenters, but such an one, as that the continuance thereof is plainly insinuated to depend upon their hearty concurrence for Abolishing the above-mentioned Penal Laws, the only legal defence of their Religion; although the Dissenters have just cause of distrust, when they call to mind how some hundreds of their Ministers were driven out of their Churches without either Accusation or Citation: the filling of many whole places with Ignorant and Scandalous persons, hath been one great occasion of all those Miseries which that Country for a long time hath groaned under. And Dissenters have but small ground to rest on any present ease founded upon a Proclamation which may be recalled every hour, and which in the first and second Editions of it gave no relief to them, especially considering that not many months before, the greatest of the forementioned Severities and Barbarities had been exercised upon them.

But to crown all, there are great and violent Presumptions inducing us to believe that those Evil Councillors, in order to the carrying on of their ill Designs, and to the gaining to themselves the more time for the effecting of them, for the encouraging of their Complices, and for the discouraging of all good Subjects, have published that the Queen hath brought forth a Son, tho' there have appeared both during the Queens pretended Bigness, and in the manner in which the Birth was managed, so many just and visible grounds of suspicion, that not only We our selves, but all the good Subjects of those Kingdoms do vehemently suspect that the pretended Prince was never born by the Queen. And is notoriously known to all the World, that many both doubted of the Queens Bigness, and of the Birth of the Child, and yet there was not any one thing done to satisfy them, or to put an end to their Doubts.

And since our Dearest and most entirely beloved Consort, the Princess, and likewise We our selves have so great an interest in this Matter, and such a Right as all the World knows to the Succession of these Kingdoms, which those Men have attempted to violate, for preventing of all redress of miseries, by the lawful Successors of the Crown, Educated by the good Providence of God, in the true Profession of the Protestant Religion, We cannot excuse our selves from espousing the true interest of these Nations in matters of such high Consequence, and from contributing all that lies in us, for the defence of the Laws and Liberties thereof, the maintaining of the Protestant Religion in them, and the securing the People in the enjoyment of their just Rights.

But that Our Intentions may be so manifest that no person may doubt or pretend to doubt thereof, to excuse themselves from concurring with us in this just Design, for the Universal good of the Nation. We do Declare that the freeing that Kingdom from all hazard of Popery and Arbitrary Power for the future, and the delivering it from what at the present doth expose it to both, the settling of it by Parliament, upon such a solid Basis as to its Religious and Civil concerns, as may most effectually redress all the abovementioned Grievances, are the true Reasons of our present undertaking as to that Nation.

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And therefore We perswade Our selves that Our Endeavours to give the best Assistance We can for the Relief of so distressed a Kingdom, shall not only not be misconstrued, but shall also be accompanied with a chearfull and universal Concurrence of the whole Nation, that even those who have been Instruments for the enslaving of it, will now shew their dislike of what they have done, by their timeous and seasonable diligence for its Rescue: And that if any shall not give us that Assistance which their Conscience to God, and their Respect to their Country oblige them to, they shall be justly charged with all the Evils that may be the effects of such a want of their duty.

And as We Our selves desire to trust to the Almighty God alone for the Success of Our Arms, so we expect all good Men, that they will apply themselves most earnestly to him for his Blessing upon Our Endeavours, that so they may tend to the Glory of his Great Name, to the Establishment of the Reformed Churches, and to the Peace and Happiness of that Kingdom.

Given under Our hand and Seal, at Our Court in the *Hague*, the tenth of *October*, in the Year of our Lord, 1688.

WILLIAM HENRY, PRINCE OF ORANGE.

By his Highnesses special Command.

C. HUYGENS.

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